

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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TAGS: SNAR, MX
SUBJECT: NARCOTICS - US CONSUMPTION VS MEXICAN PRODUCTION
OF HEROIN

REF: (A) 77 MEXICO 4617; (B) 77 MEXICO 20649

1. SUMMARY: ATTEMPTS TO RELATE GOM ERADICATION FROM
01 DEC 1976 THROUGH 30 NOV 1977 TO INFORMATION
AVAILABLE HERE ON U.S. CONSUMPTION OF MEXICAN HEROIN
REQUIRE REASSESSMENT OF CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVENESS AS REPORTED
REFTELS. EMBASSY REQUESTS ADDITIONAL CURRENT INFORMA-
TION ON U.S. HEROIN IMPORTS FROM MEXICO. END SUMMARY.

2. ON ASSUMPTION THAT APPROXIMATELY SIX MONTHS ELAPSE
BETWEEN OPIUM PRODUCTION IN MEXICO AND HEROIN CONSUMPTION
IN THE UNITED STATES, EMBASSY HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO
RELATE OPIUM PRODUCTION DURING PERIOD 01 DEC 1976 THROUGH
30 NOV 1977 TO CURRENT U.S. CONSUMPTION OF MEXICAN
HEROIN. ACCORDING TO OUR FILES, IN JULY 1977 THE USG
ESTIMATED THAT TOTAL ANNUAL U.S. HEROIN CONSUMPTION
AMOUNTED TO 6.175 METRIC TONS OF WHICH 5.175 METRIC
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TONS CAME FROM MEXICO (77 DEA 22135). WE UNDERSTAND
THAT THIS ESTIMATE HAS BEEN REVISED DOWNWARD TO APPROXI-
MATELY 4.5 METRIC TONS OF MEXICAN HEROIN CURRENTLY.

3. HOWEVER, IN ORDER TO OBTAIN 4.5 TONS OF MEXICAN
HEROIN FROM CROP YEAR ENDING 30 NOV 1977 (USING THE COM-
MON CONVERSION FACTORS OF ONE HECTARE YIELDS TEN KILOS

OF OPIUM WHICH YIELDS ONE KILO OF HEROIN), AT LEAST 22,500 POPPY FIELDS OF THE SIZE REPORTED DURING THAT PERIOD (AVERAGE 0.2 HECTARES) HAD TO BE HARVESTED. TO HARVEST THAT NUMBER OF FIELDS, U.S. AND MEXICAN SPOTTERS HAD TO HAVE MISSED AT LEAST 32.4 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL CROP, OR THE SPRAYING OF 47.9 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL FIELDS REPORTED SPRAYED WAS INEFFECTIVE, OR SOME COMBINATION OF THE ABOVE HAD TO HAVE OCCURRED. ALL OBSERVERS AGREE THAT A COMBINATION OF UNDETECTED AND INEFFECTIVELY SPRAYED FIELDS DID OCCUR, BUT THE MAGNITUDE OF A COMBINATION REQUIRED TO ACCOUNT FOR 4.5 TONS OF HEROIN (FOR EXAMPLE, 10,000 FIELDS UNDETECTED OR 17.5 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL CROP PLUS HARVESTING OF 12,500 SPRAYED FIELDS OR 27 PERCENT OF ALL FIELDS SPRAYED) IS NOT CONSISTENT WITH OUR PREVIOUS REPORTING AND SEEMS DIFFICULT TO SUPPORT.

4. IN VIEW OF THE GREATLY REDUCED NUMBER OF FIELDS REPORTED SPRAYED SINCE 1 DEC, WE BELIEVE IT ESSENTIAL TO HAVE A CURRENT ACCURATE READING OF U.S. HEROIN CONSUMPTION FROM ALL SOURCES, BUT PARTICULARLY FROM MEXICO, ON A CONTINUING BASIS. FOR EXAMPLE, IF THE 4.5 METRIC TONS OF MEXICAN HEROIN IS STILL CORRECT, MEXICO MUST HAVE ANNUALLY 50,000 POPPY FIELDS OF THE SIZE NOW ENCOUNTERED (AVERAGE 0.09 HECTARES). IN PREVIOUS YEARS APPROXIMATELY 65 PERCENT OF POPPY PRODUCTION OCCURRED DURING THE PERIOD DECEMBER THROUGH MAY; IF THIS RATIO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STILL HOLDS AND U.S. CONSUMPTION HAS NOT DECREASED, THERE HAD TO HAVE BEEN THIS SPRING ABOUT 32,000 POPPY FIELDS INSTEAD OF THE 16,000 REPORTED DESTROYED.

5. TO HELP US MAINTAIN A CONTINUING EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTS OF THE ERADICATION PROGRAM, WE WOULD THEREFORE APPRECIATE PERIODIC REPORTS OF U.S. CONSUMPTION OF MEXICAN HEROIN. MONTHLY REPORTS WOULD BE IDEAL, BUT QUARTERLY REPORTS WOULD SUFFICE. TO ENABLE US TO USE THESE REPORTS TO BEST ADVANTAGE WITH THE GOM, EACH REPORT SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

(A) TOTAL U.S. HEROIN CONSUMPTION FROM ALL SOURCES, SUPPORTED BY DATA USED TO CALCULATE THE FIGURE.

(B) TOTAL U.S. CONSUMPTION OF MEXICAN HEROIN, WITH DATA USED TO CALCULATE THE FIGURE.

(C) TOTAL U.S. SEIZURES OF HEROIN, TO EXTENT AVAILABLE, BY PROBABLE SOURCE AND CORRECTED TO NET WEIGHT (I.E., GROSS WEIGHT ADJUSTED FOR PERCENTAGE OF PURE HEROIN CONTENT).

6. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS ON DISCREPANCY
BETWEEN U.S. CONSUMPTION OF MEXICAN HEROIN AND EFFECTI-
VENESS OF GOM ERADICATION EFFORT AS REPORTED IN REFTELS.
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